

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 475
By Sands

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of William Clifford Parsons, Sr., the "grand gentleman of Columbia's retail community."

WHEREAS, it was with deep regret and a profound sense of loss that the citizens of Columbia and the members of this body learned of the death of one of our most beloved residents and respected businessmen, William Clifford Parsons; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Parsons, 100, was a prominent Columbia businessman for almost sixty years and had worked downtown on West 7th Street for 85 years; and

WHEREAS, a native of the Parsons Bend community in Maury County, he was the son of the late William Joseph and Della White Parsons; and

WHEREAS, during his teenage years, he began a distinguished 26-year career as an employee of W. W. Evans Company, selling ladies shoes and clothing; and

WHEREAS, a 1918 graduate of Columbia Central High School, Mr. Parsons attended the University of Tennessee, where he was a highly regarded student; and

WHEREAS, during World War I, he served nobly in the Students Army Training Corps at U.T. Following the signing of the Armistice, Mr. Parsons returned to the W. W. Evans Company to resume what became a flourishing business career; and

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WHEREAS, in 1938, Mr. Parsons decided to put his vast business expertise to work for himself and purchased a part interest in Pigg Brothers, a firm which latter became Pigg and Parson's Men's Clothiers; and

WHEREAS, under his able guidance, the company became more profitable and expanded with stores in Pulaski and Murfreesboro; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Parsons retired from Pigg and Parsons in October, 1996 when he was 99 years old, or as he put it "99 years young"; and

WHEREAS, active in numerous civic groups, he was extremely proud that he had been a member of the Columbia Kiwanis since January, 1938, a span of more than 60 years; and

WHEREAS, a true native of the "Volunteer State" he generously contributed his time and skills to many charitable causes and was instrumental in establishing the Columbia Central High School band; and

WHEREAS, originally a devout member of the Garden Street Presbyterian Church, Mr. Parsons served God as an active member of Westminster Presbyterian Church. In his more than ninety years of faithful stewardship to Westminster, he served as Elder, as Deacon and in numerous other important capacities; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Parsons was married to Virginia Scott Parsons for 73 years who was a member of the first University of Tennessee's women's basketball team, and this fine couple was blessed with a daughter, Mrs. John C. (Virginia) Tomlinson, Louisville, Kentucky; sons William Clifford Parsons, Jr., of Columbia, and James Scott Parsons, Sr., of Minneapolis, Minnesota; eight grandchildren; four great-grandchildren and several nieces and nephews; and

WHEREAS, friends are high in their praise of Mr. Parsons, describing him as "a true gentleman", "genteel", "kind", "considerate", "gracious", "humble", "community-minded", and "faithful Kiwanian"; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that we pause in our deliberations to reflect on his many contributions to the public good and honor the memory of this fine Tennessean; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE-HUNDREDTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, That we honor the memory of Mr. William Clifford Parsons, Sr., and express our deepest condolences to his family and friends.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.